

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. New claims 15 and 16 have been added.

**1 (original)** A method of treating an exhaust gas containing a fluorine compound, said method comprising:

heating the exhaust gas in the presence of O<sub>2</sub>; and

then adding H<sub>2</sub>O to the exhaust gas to decompose or oxidize the fluorine compound.

**2 (currently amended)** ~~The~~A method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1, wherein the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized in the presence of a catalyst after H<sub>2</sub>O is added to the exhaust gas.

**3 (currently amended)** ~~The~~A method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1, further comprising:

before said heating, removing at least one of a powdery component, a water-soluble component, and a hydrolytic component from the exhaust gas.

**4 (currently amended)** ~~The~~A method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1, further comprising:

after the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized, removing an acid gas, which is produced when the fluorine compound is decomposed, from the exhaust gas.

**5 (original)** A method of treating an exhaust gas containing a fluorine compound, said method comprising:

heating the exhaust gas in the presence of O<sub>2</sub>; and

then adding H<sub>2</sub> to the exhaust gas to decompose or oxidize the fluorine compound.

6 (currently amended) ~~The~~A method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5, wherein the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized in the presence of a catalyst after H<sub>2</sub> is added to the exhaust gas.

7 (currently amended) ~~The~~A method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5, further comprising:

before said heating, removing at least one of a powdery component, a water-soluble component, and a hydrolytic component from the exhaust gas.

8 (currently amended) ~~The~~A method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5, further comprising:

after the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized, removing an acid gas, which is produced when the fluorine compound is decomposed, from the exhaust gas.

9 (withdrawn) An apparatus for treating an exhaust gas containing a fluorine compound, said apparatus comprising:

a heating section for heating the exhaust gas;

an exhaust gas supply for supplying the exhaust gas to said heating section;

an H<sub>2</sub>O adding section located just downstream of said heating section for adding H<sub>2</sub>O to the exhaust gas by supplying H<sub>2</sub>O or H<sub>2</sub> to the exhaust gas; and

an acid gas removal section for removing an acid gas produced by a reaction between the exhaust gas and H<sub>2</sub>O.

10 (withdrawn) An apparatus for treating an exhaust gas according to claim 9, wherein said heating section comprises a heating wire, and said heating wire is wound thickly at an inlet-side part of said heating section and is wound thinly at an outlet-side part of said heating section.

11 (withdrawn) An apparatus for treating an exhaust gas according to claim 9, further

comprising:

a catalytic reactor disposed downstream of said H<sub>2</sub>O adding section for decomposing the fluorine compound by catalytic reaction.

**12 (withdrawn)** An apparatus for treating an exhaust gas according to claim 9, further comprising:

a water heating pipe disposed at said heating section;  
wherein H<sub>2</sub>O to be added to the exhaust gas in said H<sub>2</sub>O adding section is supplied through said water heating pipe and is heated by said water heating pipe.

**13 (withdrawn)** An apparatus for treating an exhaust gas according to claim 9, further comprising:

a water heating pipe disposed outside of said heating section; and  
an external heater disposed on said water heating pipe;  
wherein H<sub>2</sub>O to be added to the exhaust gas in said H<sub>2</sub>O adding section is supplied through said water heating pipe and is heated by said external heater.

**14 (withdrawn)** An apparatus for treating an exhaust gas according to claim 9, further comprising:

an air ejector for maintaining a pressure of the exhaust gas, which has been treated by said heating section, said H<sub>2</sub>O adding section, and said acid gas removal section, at a predetermined value; and

a bypass pipe for returning a part of the treated exhaust gas to an inlet side of said apparatus so as to mix the treated exhaust gas with the untreated exhaust gas.

**15 (new)** The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1,

wherein said heating of the exhaust gas is performed while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plate members.

**16 (new)** The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5,  
wherein said heating of the exhaust gas is performed while passing the exhaust gas  
through a detour path formed by plate members.